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Questionable links censored by Boland

On July 14, 1982, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence met in secret in room H-405 of the U.S. Capitol to hear testimony from Ed O'Malley, assistant director for intelligence of the FBI, regarding the role played by the Soviet Union in the American peace movement.

Immediately prior to O'Malley's testimony, Committee Chairman Rep. Edward Boland, D-Mass., told him and the FBI agents accompanying him:

"As all of us understand, policymakers need to know what influence operations are conducted by hostile intelligence services. . . . Congress and the American people will also benefit from this opportunity to hear what the hostile intelligence services are doing against us."

Well, this is certainly true. Indeed, it is important for the Congress and the American people to know what the Soviets are doing and have done to manipulate the anti-nuclear weapons crowd. But, as Reader's Digest Senior Editor John Barron reveals in his new book — "KGB Today: The Hidden Hand" — an extraordinarily blatant cover-up by Boland has prevented this story from being told in its entirety. Here are the facts:

When Boland's committee finally published a public version of its secret hearings, one of the exhibits in this document was a 48-page World Peace Council (WPC) brochure telling about the group's success in working with several Americans. For the record: The FBI's O'Malley has described the WPC as "the largest and most active Soviet front organization with affiliates in approximately 135 countries," one of "the major Soviet instruments for political action and propaganda in the peace movement."

But omitted from this exhibit — with no indication whatsoever that there was such an omission — were 14 pages reporting on a WPC meeting in Washington, D.C., in January 1978. Unlike the original WPC document, the Boland committee version had no page numbers. Thus, readers could detect no omissions. Here is some of the information contained in the deleted pages:

- That the national committee set up in the United States to host the WPC session included William Winpisinger, president of the International Association of Machinists, and three leaders of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America: Patrick Owen, Abe Feinglass and Charles Hayes, who is also a leader of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

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- Other labor leaders who endorsed this WPC meeting included: James Herman, president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union; Leon Sverdlov, general president of the International Jewelry Workers Union; and David Chaney, vice president of the Central States Joint Board, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, AFL-CIO.

- Among the others listed as having joined the activities of the WPC session were: Rep. Ron Delums, D-Calif.; Rep. John Conyers Jr., D-Mich.; Rep. John Burton, D-Calif.; Rep. Ted Weiss, D-N.Y.; Rep. Don Edwards, D-Calif.; Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y.; and Sandra Graham, the deputy mayor of Boston.

In an astoundingly candid explanation of why he censored this important information, Boland, on May 17, 1983, wrote to Rep. Mervyn Dymally, D-Calif.:

"In reviewing these documents for inclusion, I directed that those portions listing the names of participants or speakers at these meetings, including members of Congress, be deleted. I felt that it was not appropriate for the committee to document the public activities or associations of any member. I was not willing to see the committee involved in the practice of 'naming names,' a practice I would hope would never be revived in Congress."

But this admission is an outrage. How in the world are our congressional policymakers and the American public supposed to know what hostile intelligence agencies are doing to us unless we know — by name — which of us are being used by these hostile intelligence agencies or their agents? Furthermore, the publicly released Boland committee hearings and accompanying documents do name names. This document, titled, "Soviet Active Measures," mentions, by name, numerous individuals and organizations.

In any case, as John Barron correctly observes: "All citizens are entitled to all verifiable facts, whose import they may assess for themselves according to their own values."

On Dec. 9, 1982, the day after his committee had released CIA and FBI testimony regarding Soviet involvement in the United States and worldwide peace movement, Boland declared: "The bottom line is that the hearings provide no evidence that the Soviets direct, manage or manipulate the nuclear freeze movement."

This is not true, however. Plenty of evidence proving precisely such direction, management and manipulation was presented to his committee, but Boland covered it up, or at least tried to cover it up. Fortunately, there are intellectually honest reporters like John Barron around to expose such duplicity.

